vice, as originating in an amiable weakness and timidity. He is now careless in the performance of acts which in time past had been punctually attended to. How short, how hurried, how cold, are the prayers which he now utters ! Then there come to be mornings on which he is snatched away to some very important or enticing work, without engaging in his customary devotions. There are evenings, too, following days of mad excitement or sinful pleasure, in which he feels utterly indisposed to go into the presence of God, and to be left alone with him. He feels that there is an utter incongruity between the ball-room or the theatre which he has just left, and the throne of grace to which he should now go. What can he say to God when he would pray to him ? Confess his sins ? No ; he does not at present feel the act to be sinful. Thank God for giving him access to such follies ? He has his doubts whether God approves of all that has been done. But he may ask God's blessing ? No; he is scarcely disposed to acknowledge that he needs a blessing, or he doubts whether the blessing would be given. The practical conclusion to which he comes is, that it may be as consistent in him to betake himself to sleep without offering to God what he feels would only be a mockery. What is he to do the following morning ? It is a critical time. Confess his error ? No ; with the gay scene floating before his fancy, and with the taste and relish of it yet upon his palate, he is not prepared to acknowledge his folly. Morning and evening now go and return, and bring new gifts from God, and new manifestations of his goodness; but no acknowledgment of the Divine bounty on the part of him who is yet ever receiving it. No doubt, there are times when he is prompted to prayer by powerful feelings, called up by outward trials or inward convictions.

But ever when the storms of human life would

drive him to the shore, there is a tide beating him back. His course continues to be a very vacillating one—now seeming to approach to God, and anon driven farther from him, till he obtains from books or from lectures a smattering of half understood science. He now learns that all things are governed by laws regular and fixed, over which the breath of prayer can exert as little influence, as they move on in their allotted course, as the passing breeze of the earth over the sun in his circuit. False philosophy has now come to the aid of guilty feelings, and congeals their cold waters